

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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OMB-01 MC-02 AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 /068 W

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R 210633Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3160

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

S E C R E T JIDDA 8365

FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA, JO, US

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH SAUDI MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN
ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO JORDAN

1. I MET SAUDI MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN TODAY
(DEC 20) AND DISCUSSED MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO JORDAN.

2. SPECIFICS OF THE MEETING FOLLOW: I TOLD PRINCE SULTAN
ABOUT MY TALKS IN JORDAN AND MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) U.S. APPRECIATES SAUDI SUPPORT TO JORDAN;

B) U.S. CONSIDERS U.S.-SAG-JORDANIAN COOPERATION TO BE
GOOD LESSON FOR BOTH FRIENDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE
SOVIETS;

C) SAUDI ASSISTANCE TO JORDAN RE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM WAS
EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF THIS COOPERATION;

D) U.S. HAWK SURVEY TEAM HAS COMPLETED ITS WORK
IN JORDAN AND THE INITIAL LETTER OF OFFER FOR
HAWK SYSTEM HAS BEEN SIGNED BY JORDANIANS.

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3. PRINCE SULTAN THEN MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) SECURITY OF JORDAN WAS OF VITAL CONCERN TO SAUDI ARABIA AND SAUDIS WOULD NOT HOLD BACK ON SUPPORT OF JORDAN;

B) JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER RIFAI AND CHIEF OF STAFF BIN SHAKER WOULD VISIT SAUDI ARABIA ON DEC 21 AND WOULD BE DISCUSSING SAUDI SUPPORT OF JORDANIAN ARMS REQUIREMENTS;

C) WHILE SAUDI ARABIA WAS HELPING JORDAN, THEY COUWD NOT DO EVERYTHING AND THE UNITED STATES MUST CONTINUE TO PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE;

D) IT IS SAG DESIRE THAT JORDAN'S MILITARY REQUIREMENTS BE SUPPORTED BY THE U.S. AND SAG WITN NO THIRD COUNTRY PARTICIPATION.

4. PRINCE SULTAN THEN ASKED WHAT WOULD BE THE TOTAL COST OF THE JORDANIAN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM, STATING THAT JORDANIANS HAD MENTIONED A FIGURE OF \$300 MILLION. SULTAN SAID THAT ALTHOUGH SAG CONSIDERS THIS SUM A "LOT OF CASH," THEY WOULD TAKE A RESPONSIBLE POSITION RELATIVE TO FINANCING JORDANIAN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. SULTAN ALSO ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHAT WAS THE VALUE OF THE LETTER OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE WHICH HAD JUST BEEN SIGNED.

5. I AVOIDED DIRECTLY ANSWERING SULTAN'S QUERIES REGARDING VALUE OF SIGNED LOA AND TOTAL COST OF AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM WITH REMARK THAT SULTAN OULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO GET LATEST DETAILS OF THIS COMPLICATED AND EXTENSIVE PROGRAM FROM JORDANIANS ON FOLLOWING DAY THAN HE COULD FROM MY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE MOMENT. I SAID THAT THE ADMINSTRATION HAS ASKED FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR JORDAN FOR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE, OTHER THAN AIR DEFENSE. (COMMENT: IT'S BETTER FOR US TO LET SAG AND GOJ WORK OUT DETAILS ON PAYMENT TERMS
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OF HAWK DEAL WITH A MINIMUM OF REFERENCE TO OR INVOLVEMENT BY U.S.).
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